

Inflatable Personal Flotation Devices

Inflatable PFDs do not meet the U.S. carriage requirements unless the inflatable PFD is actually being worn. Inflatable PFDs are designed for adults weighing over 80 lbs with a chest size of 30-52". An inflated over-the-shoulder inflatable PFD immobilizes the head area similar to a collar, so it would actually stabilize some neck injuries. Most over-the-shoulder inflatable PFDs have more buoyancy (35 pounds) which would physically raise the person's body higher out of the water than most standard foam core life jackets (22 pounds buoyancy).

Cons: Do not use below freezing. Currently there are no inflatable PFDs that are USCG approved for use by youth under 16 years of age. Hard to swim in an inflated PFD. Not recommended for whitewater where sharp rocks could puncture the air bladder. Not for repeated capsizes—once inflated need to install a replacement CO2 cartridge. Should not be used by non-swimmers in case inflation of the air bladder is needed by blowing into inflation tube. Air bladder must not be partially inflated when CO2 cartridge is activated or bladder may explode.



Over-the-shoulder hydrostatic activation inflatable PFD

Cons: water pressure activated inflation device may not inflate if a person is floating face down while wearing waterproof clothing under the PFD since it requires 4 inches water pressure to activate.



Over-the-shoulder PFD automatic inflating dissolving-pill-in-a-bobbin.

Cons: can accidentally inflate by splashing water or rain which may dissolve the pill.



Over-the-shoulder inflatable PFD (photo showing inflated)



Note: A Belt-Pack must be worn on the lap (not on the back), since once inflated it must be pulled over one's head.



Belt-Pack manual inflatable PFD

Belt-Pack inflatable PFD (inflated)

Cons: Belt-Pack PFDs requires the manual pulling of a lanyard tab to inflate (does not automatically inflate when immersed). Once inflated the air bladder must be pulled over your head & the straps connected.



Re-Arming Kit

Order the appropriate size CO2 cartridge—33 Gram / 24 gram / 16 gram cylinders



Belt manual inflatable buoyancy aid PFD

Cons: Buoyancy aids PFDs requires the manual pulling of a lanyard tab to inflate. Not recommended for non-swimmers or weak swimmers. Requires the conscious holding of the inflated air bladder.



Buoyancy aid PFD (inflated)